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LABOR INFORMATION BULLETIN

FEBRUARY 1937

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BORIS STERN, Editor

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COLLECTIVE BARGAINING UNDER THE RAILWAY LABOR ACT

By
OTTO S. BEYER, MEMBER
NATIONAL MEDIATION BOARD

The outstanding characteristic of present-day labor difficulties is that, by virtue of the very size of the industries affected, they seriously threaten the welfare of the whole nation. For example, a major shut-down in an industry of the magnitude of automobile or steel manufacturing could, if of sufficiently long duration, become a disaster no less serious than a great flood or a protracted drought.

It is perhaps fortunate that we have before us years of experience in the nature of Federal supervision of railroad labor relations to throw light on possible ways to alleviate labor disputes and to bring greater stability to the labor relations of other industries which are national in scope.

For years the railroads of the country have been in the category of one of these major industries. The stoppage of railroad service would not only deprive the public of essential transportation, but would also cause serious repercussions in many other lines of industrial activity.

The Federal Government has been actively concerned with railroad labor relations over a period of approximately 50 years. Shortly after Congress passed the first act in 1887, subjecting to regulation some of their practices affecting the public interest, it also passed the first Federal railway labor act. Periodically from that time until as late as 1935, Congress has amplified the activities of the Federal Government in the field of railroad labor relations. The 1934 amendment to the Railway Labor Act of 1926 incorporated certain important provisions designed to provide complete independence of the railroads and their employees in the matter of self-organization. The 1935 amendment extended the benefits of the Railway Labor Act to the air-transport industry and its employees.

Perhaps the most significant thing about the Railway Labor Act is the policy which it lays down for the guidance of the railway managements and their employees. This policy is simple and to the point:

> It shall be the duty of all carriers, their officers, agents, and employees to exert every reasonable effort to make and maintain agreements concerning rates of pay, rules, and working conditions, and to settle all disputes, whether arising out of the application of such agreements or otherwise, in order to avoid any interruption to commerce or to the operation of any carrier growing out of any dispute between the carrier and the employees thereof.

The emphasis of this policy is the **making and maintaining of agreements between labor and management** to govern their relationship. To accomplish this purpose the act first seeks to safeguard the right of employees and managements respectively to associate themselves together as they see fit--that is, without influence, interference, or coercion on the part of one over the other.

The railroads are prohibited from resorting to intimidation or coercion to discourage employees from exercising their right of self-organization and the selection

of representatives. No carrier may use its funds to assist or contribute to a labor organization or labor representatives, perform any work for a labor organization, or deny an individual employment because of membership or nonmembership in a labor union. By the same token, the so-called "yellow dog" contract is made illegal in the railroad industry.

If a dispute arises among the employees of a railroad as to who are its representatives, the services of the National Mediation Board, created by the act, may be invoked to investigate such a dispute and determine who are the proper representatives of the employees. The National Mediation Board, if it sees fit, may hold an election to determine such representation. The railroads are required to make their pay rolls available to the Board to facilitate its work of determining who is properly eligible to participate in the election.

The Railway Labor Act makes it illegal for a railroad company to change the rates of pay, rules, or working conditions of its employees as a class, as incorporated in agreements, except in the manner prescribed in their agreements with labor unions or in the act. The railroads must, by printed notices, advise their employees that all labor disputes will be handled in accordance with the requirements of the act. It is a misdemeanor, punishable by fine and imprisonment, for a railroad, its agents, or officers, to fail to comply with these terms of the act.

One very important feature calls for the serving of written notices by one party on the other of proposed changes in existing agreements, or of a desire to make a new agreement. Such notices must be acknowledged within 10 days, and within 30 days conferences must begin for purposes of negotiating the proposed changes or the new agreement.

The act also lays down three major steps to be followed in the process of making and maintaining agreements. The first is direct negotiation between representatives of the employees and the representatives of the railroads. The conferees, while in negotiation, are required to make a serious and determined effort to adjust their differences.

If the issues in question cannot be adjusted by direct negotiation, either or both parties may invoke the services of the National Mediation Board. If necessary, the Board, of its own accord, may proffer its services to mediate. In any case, it is important to note that both sides are still bound to keep the peace, that is, the railroad may not change any of the conditions involved in the dispute and the employees may not leave the service.

The third important step in the making and maintenance of labor agreements involves arbitration. If direct negotiations do not result in agreement, and mediation proves unfeasible in whole or in part, both parties may agree to arbitrate their differences. In this event the parties to the dispute sign a contract to arbitrate the remaining issues. The resulting award is final and binding upon both parties for 1 year. All proceedings before an arbitration board are formal. Testimony is taken under oath, and the resulting awards are filed with the district court.

In practice, it has been discovered that the three steps outlined above result in a gradual narrowing down of the issues in dispute. Direct negotiations, if not entirely successful, tend to bring about agreement on at least some of the questions involved. When direct negotiations are followed up by mediation, additional matters are disposed of. The result is that if arbitration is resorted to after mediation, the issues usually become limited to the most highly controversial questions involved in the dispute. Thus, in a way, the procedure as outlined becomes in essence a process of elimination.

If, however, it should happen that the National Mediation Board is unsuccessful, either in adjusting the matter at issue through mediation, or in bringing about arbitration, then both parties to the dispute are relieved of any obligations under the law. But, if an act of one of the parties threatens to interrupt commerce and deprive a part of the country of essential transportation service, the National

Mediation Board again steps into the picture. At this point the Board notifies the President, who may, in his judgment, appoint a special fact-finding or emergency board. Such a board is required to investigate promptly all of the facts regarding the dispute and report to the President within 30 days. During these 30 days and for 30 days after such an emergency board has made its report no change, except by agreement, may be made by the parties to the controversy in the conditions out of which the dispute arose.

Another important feature of the Railway Labor Act is the National Railroad Adjustment Board, which was created by the 1934 amendments to the act. This board handles all disputes that grow out of individual grievances or out of the need for interpreting existing rules and labor agreements. If a man has a wage claim, or if he considers that he has been denied his rights under a given rule, or if he feels he has been improperly discharged, and the matter cannot be adjusted on his own railroad through his chosen representative, he may refer the matter to the National Railroad Adjustment Board for final determination. The Adjustment Board consists of an equal number of labor and railroad representatives. In the event these representatives deadlock, a neutral may be called in, or appointed by the National Mediation Board, to make a decision. All decisions of the National Railroad Adjustment Board are final and binding.

The orderly processes of the Railway Labor Act furnish a well-rounded plan for dealing with the labor problems of the railroad and air-transportation industries. The plan includes the following--

1. The basic objective of the act is the making and maintaining of labor agreements in the interest of the public service.

2. The act provides for full freedom of association of the employees, insuring at the same time that the selection of representatives by either party shall be free from interference, influence, or coercion by the other.

3. Disputes among employees as to who may represent them are adjusted through investigations and elections conducted by the National Mediation Board.

4. When labor agreements are to be changed, or new agreements negotiated, notice must be served by the party desiring the change, acknowledgment made, and meetings of representatives promptly held.

5. If direct negotiation does not result in agreement, the services of the National Mediation Board may be invoked, or the Board may proffer its services.

6. If mediation does not succeed in agreement, voluntary arbitration may be employed.

7. Should neither of these three steps result in final agreement and labor difficulties are threatened, a special fact-finding board may be created by the President. Pending the findings of such a board, and for 30 days thereafter, the *status quo* must be maintained.

8. If individual disputes growing out of the interpretation of provisions of labor agreements, or out of grievances of one kind or another, cannot be adjusted in joint conferences between the railroads and their men and so prove a source of irritation, the act establishes the National Railroad Adjustment Board to dispose of these cases.

The labor problems of the railroads are amicably adjusted with Federal assistance because a definite start was made to this end 50 years ago and a program was gradually developed. The railroad industry has had its share of labor difficulties in the past, just the same as all major industries. However, the fact that a well-rounded scheme for dealing with these problems is now accepted, that legally established agencies are actively at work, and that trained groups of individuals representing the railroads, the railroad employees, and the Federal Government are continuously on the job, industrial peace is the rule of the industry. The policy laid down by Congress in the Railway Labor Act has clearly and definitely demonstrated itself to be in the public interest in assuring safe and uninterrupted transportation.

RESULTS OF COLLECTIVE BARGAINING IN THE SILK-DRESS INDUSTRY

MARY ANDERSON, DIRECTOR
WOMEN'S BUREAU, U.S. DEPT. OF LABOR

The value of a union agreement is demonstrated in a study by the Women's Bureau of the Department of Labor of work conditions in the manufacture of silk dresses. Better pay, shorter hours, and more employment are shown to have resulted from the union agreement negotiated in 1933 between the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union and the several associations of manufacturers in the silk-dress industry. The 1936 agreement brought, in addition, a fundamental change in the method of price settlement in the industry, which has gone a long way toward controlling the cutthroat competition that has for years been responsible for the exceedingly low standard of working conditions and the low earnings of dressmakers.

Practically four-fifths of the dress industry is concentrated in New York City. The problems of securing adequate wage scales and good working conditions for dressmakers in New York have been complicated by the use of two systems of production in the industry. Some manufacturers produce the complete dress in their own factories--from the original design to the last stitch on the garment. These are known as "inside" manufacturers. But only one out of every five dresses is manufactured this way. The other 80 percent of the dresses are made under the jobber-contractor system.

A jobber or wholesaler buys the materials, designs the styles, and often even has the dresses cut in his establishment. He then turns over the actual manufacturing of the dresses to "contractors" or "submanufacturers", who for the most part have small shops employing between 30 and 40 workers. It has been the custom for contractors to bid for the work of the jobbers, and the contracts have usually been awarded to those making the lowest bid. The resulting competition among contractors has been so severe that in many cases they have been able to fulfill their contracts only by forcing their employees to work under sweatshop conditions.

The 1933 agreement between the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union and the inside manufacturers, the jobbers, and the contractors, was designed to put an end to the sweatshops. Recognizing existing cutthroat competition as the major cause of the substandard working conditions, the agreement provided certain basic work standards applicable to all manufacturers in the industry. A 35-hour week and the same minimum hourly wage rates were established for both "inside" and "contract" shops. Further, jobbers were required to pay contractors an amount sufficient to cover these minimum wages and in addition a reasonable sum for overhead expenses.

The study to determine the effect of this agreement on the workers in the industry covered more than 300 establishments employing nearly 11,000 women and 2,500 men. Eighty-four of the plants were in New York, the others being located in the eastern area, which includes the suburbs of New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut, and in Boston, Philadelphia, Chicago, Cleveland, St. Louis, Los Angeles, St. Paul, and Minneapolis. Wages, hours, and other conditions of work existing in these shops in the spring of 1933, prior to the union agreement, were compared with those for the period after the agreement had become effective. The study showed that the agreement resulted in reductions in the working time, ranging from 5 hours per week in some plants to 29 in others. Nearly half of the workers covered by the survey had their workweek reduced by 13 hours or more.

All the employees included in the study were piece workers. More than half were operators, who, as a rule, make the entire dress--that is, sewing seams, putting in the sleeves, and completing the dress. The final touches are added by the finishers, who sew on snaps, bows, buckles, or other ornaments. These were almost exclusively women. The pressers, on the contrary, were mostly men. In a few shops Negro women are employed in this work.

The union agreement set minimum hourly rates for each of these occupational groups. The rates varied by locality and the type of dress manufactured. The highest rates were set for New York and these served as a base or guide for establishing wage rates for other dress centers.

Every year the dress industry turns out thousands of new styles, each model requiring a different amount of work and skill. This variety makes it necessary to determine separate piece rates for each style. The 1933 agreement provided that union representatives cooperate with the management of each shop in determining for the shop the average time needed to make each type of dress manufactured. Piece rates were then set to correspond with the hourly minimum-wage rates provided in the agreement.

A WORK ROOM IN THE LADIES' DRESS INDUSTRY

The result has been a pronounced increase in the hourly and weekly earnings for operators, pressers, and finishers in all the localities on all types of dresses. The highest earnings were found in New York City, where after the agreement had become effective, half of the operators on the higher priced dresses earned $34.75 per week or more. This was a gain of over 50 percent. The greatest increase in the weekly earnings of operators on the more expensive dresses took place in Cleveland. It amounted to 114 percent. The increase in the average weekly earnings of finishers ranged from 33 percent in New York to 84 percent in the eastern area and for pressers from 21 percent in Boston to 70 percent in the eastern area.

Average weekly earnings of operators making the cheaper dresses selling at wholesale for $3.75 or less advanced by over 60 percent in all centers except Boston. Weekly earnings of finishers of the lower priced dresses advanced 44 percent in New York and 112 percent in the eastern area.

Another major gain to workers resulting from the 1933 union agreement was the lessening of the differences between wages in contract shops and in the inside shops in New York. The agreement provided the same minimum rates for both, and as a result piece rates in the contract shops in New York advanced by at least 50 percent.

The 1936 agreement incorporates the same hour and wage stipulations which were provided in 1933. The new agreement also establishes uniform piece rates for all the shops operated by any one manufacturer, whether inside or on a contractual basis. Instead of establishing minimum prices for each shop separately, as was provided in the 1933 agreement, the price committee now set up establishes uniform rates for each employer, these rates to apply to all the workers in all the shops operated by the particular employer. This change tends still further to reduce the cutthroat competition between shops and makes it possible to extend the benefits of improved standards and higher earnings to all the workers in the industry.

SAFETY AND ACCIDENTS IN THE IRON AND STEEL INDUSTRY

MAX D. KOSSORIS
BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS

If the experience of the entire iron and steel industry had been as favorable as that for the select one-third of the industry with an effective long established safety program, there would have been only 5,006 disabling injuries in iron and steel manufacturing in 1935 instead of 13,622. According to a survey by the Bureau of Labor Statistics the select one-third of the industry had an injury rate of 6.30 per million hours worked in 1935. The injury-frequency rate for the remaining two-thirds of the industry was 21.55. The rate for the industry as a whole was 17.14.

The nature of the product and the methods of operation in the group of establishments with the lowest injury rate are very similar to those in the remaining two-thirds of the industry. It is therefore fair to conclude that their comparatively low injury rate was due almost exclusively to the effective safety policy systematically pursued by this group of plants over a long period of years.

How Accidents Were Reduced. The safety program of this group of establishments was started as early as 1906. As a result the number of disabling injuries decreased from 60.3 per million hours worked in 1913 to 23.1 in 1920, 7.7 in 1930, and 6.3 in 1935. This reduction in the frequency rate to about one-tenth the 1913 figure demonstrates beyond any doubt what can be done with an effective safety and accident prevention policy.

These safety activities, which have been followed by a group of iron and steel establishments for about 30 years, have been based upon (1) proper handling of workers and (2) proper handling of machinery and equipment. The first is accomplished through special training of the foremen on the job and the second through a policy of safety engineering and good housekeeping.

New men not familiar with the hazards of the job are often ignorant of the dangers they face. By carefully instructing them and by teaming them for a training period with more experienced workers who could both teach and watch them, foremen are in a position to reduce accidents. Inexperienced help unacquainted with safety practices formulated by the industry are not only a menace to themselves but also to their more experienced coworkers.

The interest of foremen in safety work has been enlisted by considerable monetary awards instituted in the form of bonuses for accident reductions. The bonus is given to the foreman if the rate of injuries in his department is not higher than the basic injury rate established on previous experience. This award is increased if the actual rate of injuries falls below the established rate. The result has been a remarkable reduction in the type of minor injuries which foremen generally are able to prevent.

GOGGLES, GLOVES, AND BOOTS PROTECT WORKERS HANDLING HOT STEEL

Reduction in Serious Injuries. The attention of safety engineers has been directed to working conditions over which workers and foremen have no control and which have accounted for the more severe types of injuries. Their task has been in part facilitated by technological developments in machinery and equipment which, although aimed primarily at better production,

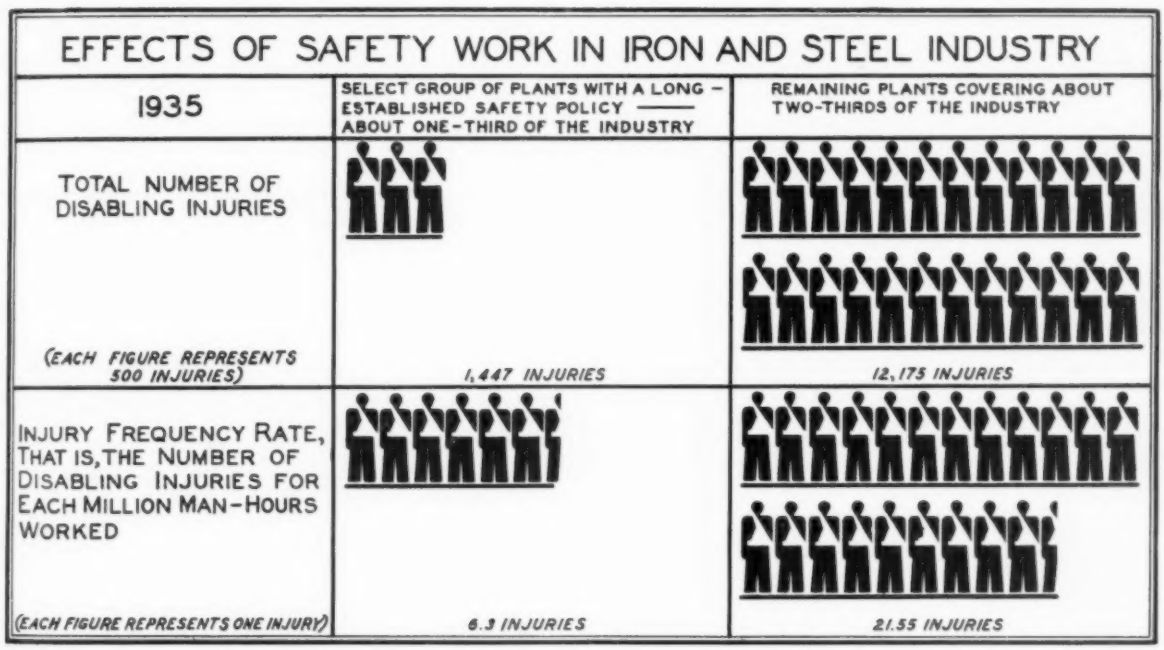
also provide greater protection from injuries to workers. By providing workers with safe tools, guarded machinery, and a safe place in which to work, and by prescribing safe ways of working, the safety engineers have been able to cut deeply into accidents resulting in the more severe types of injuries.

Safety Pays. The experience of these establishments in the iron and steel industry shows what can be done by management which makes it its business to prevent accidents to their workers. There is ample reason aside from the humanitarian aspect why management should consider accident prevention as part of its job.

Accident prevention protects the life, limb, and earning power of the workers. But it also means savings in workmen's compensation and in medical and hospital expenses, the curtailing of lawsuits with legal and court fees, the prevention of spoilage of materials and possible damage to machinery, and the maintenance of the morale of the workers. In the long run, well-defined and administered safety programs mean a decided economic saving to management in terms of dollars and cents.

TREND OF INJURIES IN 1935

The experience of the iron and steel industry as a whole shows that industrial injuries were less frequent in 1935 than in 1934. Accidents that did occur in 1935 were also of a less serious nature than in 1934. The injury-frequency rate -- that is, the number of injuries per million hours worked -- decreased from 19.42 in 1934 to 17.14 in 1935.


EFFECTS OF SAFETY WORK IN IRON AND STEEL INDUSTRY
1935
SELECT GROUP OF PLANTS WITH A LONG - ESTABLISHED SAFETY POLICY —— ABOUT ONE-THIRD OF THE INDUSTRY
REMAINING PLANTS COVERING ABOUT TWO-THIRDS OF THE INDUSTRY
TOTAL NUMBER OF DISABLING INJURIES
(EACH FIGURE REPRESENTS 500 INJURIES)
1,447 INJURIES
12,175 INJURIES
INJURY FREQUENCY RATE, THAT IS, THE NUMBER OF DISABLING INJURIES FOR EACH MILLION MAN-HOURS WORKED
(EACH FIGURE REPRESENTS ONE INJURY)
6.3 INJURIES
21.55 INJURIES

In other words, for every million hours worked in the industry there were approximately two disabling injuries less in 1935 than in 1934.

Total working time in all departments of the iron and steel industry surveyed advanced by about 17 percent in 1935, as compared with 1934. The number of disabling injuries, however, increased only 3 percent, from 13,197 in 1934 to 13,622 in 1935. These figures do not include injuries which required only first aid or involved no lost time after the day of the accident.

The melting and rolling branch of the iron and steel industry had fewer disabling injuries per million hours worked in 1935 than in 1934. Its injury-frequency rate in 1935 was 13.16, as against 14.41 in the previous year. Outstanding reductions in the injury-frequency rate were experienced in electric-furnace departments, plate mills, and sheet mills. Smaller decreases were reported for blast furnaces, open-hearth furnaces, bar mills, cold rolling mills, heavy rolling mills, and unclassified rolling mills.

Sharp increases in the number of injuries per million hours worked were recorded by hot mills and strip mills. Increases in the injury-frequency rate were also found for bessemer converters, rod mills, tube mills, and miscellaneous departments.

The finishing branch of the iron and steel industry experienced more disabling injuries than either of the other two branches of the industry. In 1935 it had a disabling injury rate of 28.30 per million man-hours worked. This high rate, however, was 16 percent smaller than in 1934. Outstanding reductions in the injury-frequency rate occurred in foundries, car-wheel departments, cold drawing departments, and forge shops. Other departments with reductions in the disability-frequency rate were bolts and nuts, fabricating shops, galvanizing and tinning, stampings, wire drawing, and wire springs. Considerable increases in the injury-frequency rate were reported for the axle-works and woven-wire-fence departments, and a smaller increase in the nails and staples department.

In the service and maintenance branch the hours worked in 1935 increased 19 percent, injuries increased 15 percent, and time lost from injuries, 18 percent. This group failed to equal the performance of the departments in the other two branches of the iron and steel industry in reducing injuries. The injury-frequency rate decreased only slightly from 9.19 per million hours worked in 1934 to 8.83 in 1935.

NUMBER OF INJURIES PER MILLION HOURS WORKED*

DEPARTMENT	1935	1934
All departments	17.14	19.42
Melting and rolling	13.16	14.41
Heavy rolling mills	6.51	9.29
Rod mills	8.33	8.25
Bessemer converters	8.78	7.94
Blast furnaces	9.43	12.99
Open-hearth furnaces	10.62	13.64
Bar mills	10.74	14.94
Plate mills	11.10	15.05
Sheet mills	11.15	15.74
Tube mills	11.83	11.22
Cold rolling mills	14.16	20.03
Miscellaneous	15.12	14.77
Hot mills	16.64	13.81
Strip mills	17.54	5.06
Unclassified rolling mills	17.80	18.17
Electric furnaces	41.43	48.36
Finishing	28.30	33.70
Galvanizing and tinning	7.06	10.08
Nails and staples	8.67	8.24
Woven-wire fence	11.24	5.94
Wire drawing	12.39	12.40
Bolts and nuts	20.01	24.66
Cold drawing	24.06	35.82
Forge shops	26.39	31.36
Fabricating shops	30.13	34.41
Wire springs	37.30	42.57
Car wheels	37.40	46.59
Stampings	39.04	42.19
Foundries	41.69	51.60
Axle works	51.20	46.27
Service and maintenance	8.83	9.19
Power-houses	1.99	3.35
Docks and ore yards	2.87	2.52
Electrical	5.37	4.48
Yards and transportation	8.34	9.57
Mechanical	9.95	10.38

** Generally referred to as injury-frequency rate*

Type of Disability. Industrial injuries are generally classified in four groups: (1) Death; (2) permanent total, permanently disabling a worker from further industrial work; (3) permanent partial, such as the loss of an arm, a leg, one or more fingers, etc.; and (4) temporary total, from which the injured worker is able to return to work completely cured.

Most of the injuries in the iron and steel industry are of the temporary total type. Out of every 1,000 disabling injuries in 1935, 926 were classified as temporary total, with an average loss of 22 days of work per injury.

The number of deaths and permanent total disabilities per 1,000 injuries declined from 9 in 1934 to 8 in 1935. Among the individual departments, the highest relative number of fatal and permanent disability injuries were experienced by yards and transportation, electrical and mechanical services, and blast furnaces.

COST OF LIVING IN DECEMBER 1936

Food costs -- the largest single item in the budget of a worker's family -- averaged 1.7 percent lower on December 15 than on September 15, 1936 in the 32 large cities regularly surveyed by the Bureau of Labor Statistics. This sharp drop was offset by increases of 1.3 percent in clothing, rent, and housefurnishing goods, and smaller advances in the cost of fuel and light and miscellaneous items.

Clothing costs rose in each of the 32 cities covered by the survey. In New Orleans the rise averaged 3.8 percent. This was due largely to State and city sales taxes that became effective on October 1, 1936. In five other cities the cost of clothing increased 2 percent or more.

CHANGES IN THE COST OF LIVING IN 15 SELECTED CITIES

AREA AND CITY	PERCENTAGE INCREASE (+) OR DECREASE (-)				
	September 15, 1936 to December 15, 1936	January 15, 1936 to December 15, 1936	June 1933 to December 15, 1936	December 1929 to December 15, 1936	1923-25 Average to December 15, 1936
Average for 32 large cities	*No change*	+ 1.3	+ 10.6	- 17.3	- 17.6
NORTH ATLANTIC:					
Boston	- 0.2	+ 0.4	+ 8.8	- 17.8	- 16.7
New York	- 0.1	+ 0.1	+ 7.9	- 17.0	- 15.7
Portland, Me.	+ 0.1	+ 0.6	+ 9.1	- 14.6	- 14.2
SOUTH ATLANTIC:					
Atlanta	- 0.3	+ 1.8	+ 13.9	- 16.6	- 18.7
Baltimore	- 0.1	+ 0.8	+ 11.1	- 14.1	- 13.6
Jacksonville	+ 0.4	+ 1.3	+ 12.9	- 16.3	- 19.6
NORTH CENTRAL:					
Chicago	+ 0.2	+ 2.4	+ 11.0	- 21.3	- 21.5
Detroit	- 0.2	+ 2.8	+ 20.1	- 18.6	- 21.2
St. Louis	- 1.0	+ 1.0	+ 10.4	- 18.4	- 17.1
SOUTH CENTRAL:					
Birmingham	- 0.1	+ 1.9	+ 13.7	- 20.5	- 23.6
Houston	+ 0.5	+ 2.0	+ 14.4	- 16.9	- 18.1
New Orleans	+ 0.5	+ 1.6	+ 10.1	- 16.1	- 17.0
WESTERN:					
Denver	- 0.3	+ 2.0	+ 11.6	- 14.0	- 16.9
San Francisco	+ 0.1	+ 0.4	+ 7.9	- 15.4	- 15.1
Seattle	+ 0.3	+ 1.4	+ 8.5	- 14.9	- 15.2

Rents paid by wage earners and lower-salaried workers have been rising steadily since the spring of 1935. Thirty cities reported increases in rents during the period covered. In Detroit and Birmingham the advance averaged more than 6 percent.

On the whole, average living costs for families of wage earners and lower-salaried workers in the 32 cities combined were about the same on December 15 as on September 15, 1936. They were 1.3 percent higher than on January 15, 1936 and 10.6 percent higher than in June 1933. They were 17.3 percent lower than in December 1929 and 17.6 percent lower than the average for the 3 years 1923-25.

WORKING CONDITIONS IN THE BREAD-BAKING INDUSTRY

FRANCES JONES
BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS

Although the small bake shop is still the predominant unit in the bread-baking industry, the last quarter of a century witnessed rapid and significant changes in the technology of bread baking. With them came a vast improvement in working conditions which affected not only the more technologically advanced bakeries, but to a large extent also the small bake shops. The bakery worker is no longer required to labor 16 or more hours a day in the semidark and damp cellars which were common in the industry at the close of the nineteenth century. As far as light, ventilation, and general sanitation are concerned, the typical bakery of today compares favorably with similar size establishments in other industries.

Hiring and Firing Policies. A recent survey by the Bureau of Labor Statistics of 259 bakeries employing approximately 21,000 workers disclosed that new employees are almost universally recruited from direct applicants. In union plants, however, new workers are generally obtained through the trade-union locals. About one-fourth of the plants studied had trade-union agreements. They covered approximately one-fifth of the bake-shop or processing workers, that is, the workers directly engaged in one of the several operations involved in the process of baking bread.

In practically all nonunion bakeries and in many union machine plants surveyed, bakers learned their trade by working as helpers. In the union handicraft bakeries, however, apprenticeship is the prevailing method of training skilled bakery workers.

Previous experience in the occupation usually outweighs all other considerations in selecting applicants for jobs. The hiring age for processing workers generally ranges from 18 to 45 and that for driver salesmen from 21 to 35. The majority of plants surveyed reported a preference for married men and unmarried women. A few bakeries employed Negro labor.

The practice of giving advanced notices of lay-offs or dismissals or of equivalent pay was found in more than two-thirds of the shops studied by the Bureau of Labor Statistics. The usual period of notice was 1 week.

Methods of Wage Payment. Processing workers in bake shops are generally paid on a time basis. Three out of every four establishments and virtually all of the smaller shops studied by the Bureau of Labor Statistics paid their production workers weekly salaries. On the other hand, more than 90 percent of the driver salesmen covered by the study were paid wholly or in part on a commission basis.

Higher rates for overtime work was the practice of 56 percent of the plants surveyed. In other plants workers received straight time rates and time off for overtime. The overtime rates applied principally to production workers and frequently also to maintenance and garage employees. Driver

PLACING DOUGH INTO AN AUTOMATIC TRAVELING OVEN

salesmen seldom are allowed overtime pay, as they usually control their own working time.

Hours of Work. In contrast with the regular work schedules in the average factory the starting and quitting hours of bakers are highly irregular. This is due largely to the fact that the operations involved in bread baking follow a definite sequence and some workers can get started only after the previous operation has been completed. Thus, in a single-shift shop, scalers who weigh the various ingredients used in baking, may start work at 1:30 p.m., mixers at 2:00 p.m., dividers at 7:30 p.m., molders and bench hands at 8:00 p.m., ovenmen at 8:30 p.m., and wrappers at 10:00 p.m. Multiple shift operations make this schedule more complex.

Daily hours of work often vary with week-end and holiday rushes and midweek lulls. The industry has made an attempt to level out these weekly peaks and lows, and several of the plants covered by the survey were able to maintain uniform daily work schedules throughout the week, usually with the help of regular relief men.

Union agreements have been helpful in stabilizing the day's work by defining starting and finishing hours, by providing one regular day off per week, and by regulating the amount of permissible overtime. In many shops split shifts have been abolished by the union requirement that the baker's hours of labor be consecutive and by fixing a minimum time off between shifts.

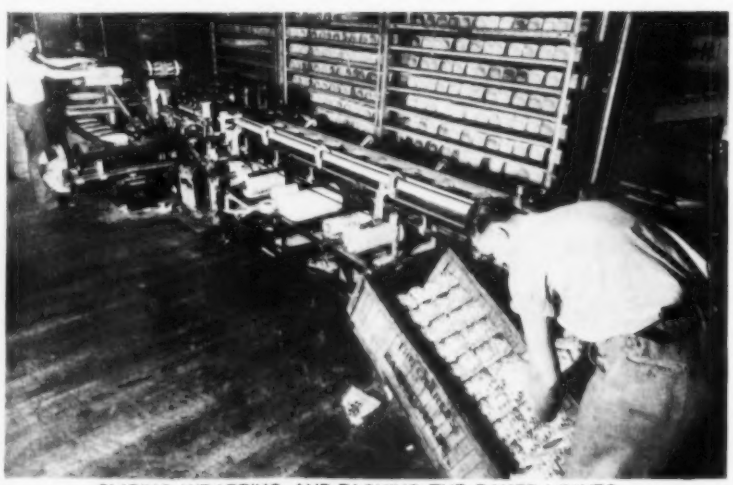
Night work is still very common. A typical sample of 93 plants showed that slightly more than half of the working time in these plants were night operations between 6 p.m. and 6 a.m. The day's work of a large proportion of the employees studied ended between midnight and morning.

Holidays and Vacations. Holiday observance is general throughout the industry. Only 19 small shops observed no holidays, 17 observed 1 day a year, and the remaining plants allowed their employees from 2 to 11 holidays annually. About half of all employees, including nearly all the salaried workers, were paid in full for holidays.

Vacations with pay for wage earners are more common in the bakery industry than in many others. Nearly half of the plants studied provided vacations with pay for some of their workers and of these about 12 percent gave vacations with pay to all their employees. One week was the usual time allowed, although several plants gave 2 weeks. A minimum service of 1 year was the usual requirement for eligibility to a vacation.

Occupational Expenses and Welfare Services. Bake-shop workers and driver salesmen are generally required to supply and maintain their own uniforms, although in some cases this is done at the expense of the firm. Driver salesmen have to provide their own operator's licenses, are required to supply bonds, and are often responsible for credit accounts.

Employee-welfare activities are not very common and are found only in the larger bakeries. Such activities include organized safety programs, insurance, mutual-benefit associations, and social and recreational work. About 60 percent of the employees surveyed were protected by group-insurance plans, usually on a contributory basis.



SLICING, WRAPPING, AND PACKING THE BAKED LOAVES

GATHERING EMPLOYMENT STATISTICS

ALICE OLENIN
BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS

What is the employment situation today? How does present employment in the cotton-goods industry compare with employment in this industry 10 years ago? How much has the earning power of the worker advanced in the last 2 or 3 years? Inquiries of this kind are constantly coming to the Bureau of Labor Statistics from employers and workers alike. How does the Bureau get this information?

The Bureau of Labor Statistics began collecting employment and pay-roll data in 1915, when regular reports were received from seven important manufacturing industries. Gradually the number of industries covered has been expanded until at the present time records are obtained from 89 manufacturing and 16 nonmanufacturing industries.

Over 135,000 separate firms employing more than 7,000,000 workers voluntarily report to the Bureau of Labor Statistics each month the number of workers employed, the amount of wages and salaries paid out, and the total number of hours worked during the pay period ending nearest to the fifteenth of the month. The manufacturing firms reporting employ more than one-half of the total number of factory workers in the country.

In many States the task of gathering and compiling employment and pay-roll information is performed by State departments of labor or other organizations. These States forward their reports to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. This cooperation with other agencies avoids duplication of reports on the part of the employer.

All information received from individual firms, either directly or through State agencies, is kept strictly confidential. Reports are seen only by sworn employees of the Bureau or its cooperating State agencies. The information is used only in combination with other reports from the same industry. No one reading the Bureau of Labor Statistics published summaries of employment, pay rolls, and hours of work can identify the figures supplied by any individual reporting firm.

In collecting these data no attempt is made to secure employment and pay-roll figures from all firms in a particular industry. Such a procedure would be impracticable, as the Bureau could not assemble and compile promptly each month the several million reports without greatly enlarging its facilities and personnel. Moreover, no nation-wide law exists compelling employers to furnish this information. Consequently the Bureau depends upon the voluntary cooperation of a representative number of employers in each industry surveyed and in each State.

From this representative sample the Bureau first computes indexes of employment and pay rolls and then estimates the total volume of employment and amount of pay rolls for each industry. Experience has shown that this "sample" method of obtaining month to month data and of then applying the results of the sample to the industry as a whole gives a reasonably reliable picture of the current situation and of the changes from month to month and from year to year.

In addition to the regular monthly estimates and indexes of employment and weekly pay rolls, the Bureau publishes data on the average hours of work per week and average hourly and weekly earnings of workers in various industries.

The employment and pay-roll estimates in manufacturing and nonmanufacturing industries are carefully checked with the periodic census reports which cover the total number of workers employed in an industry and the total amount of wages disbursed by that industry. If, after the latest census data are compiled, variations are found in the Bureau's index, the indexes are adjusted to conform with the findings of the census. It is by this method of current sampling and constant checking with the latest census figures that labor, industry, and the public are advised concerning monthly estimates of the number of workers employed in the various industries and their earnings.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics publishes employment and pay roll data and average hours of work, hourly earnings, and weekly earnings for the following 89 manufacturing and 16 nonmanufacturing industries.

MANUFACTURING INDUSTRIES

Durable-goods groups:

- Iron and steel and their products
  - Blast furnaces and rolling mills
  - Bolts, nuts, washers, and rivets
  - Cast-iron pipe
  - Cutlery and edge tools
  - Forgings, iron and steel
  - Hardware
  - Plumbers' supplies
  - Steam and hot-water heating apparatus and steam fittings
  - Stoves
  - Structural and ornamental metal work
  - Tin cans and other tinware
  - Tools
  - Wirework
- Machinery
  - Agricultural implements
  - Cash registers, adding machines, etc.
  - Electrical machinery and supplies
  - Engines, turbines, and tractors
  - Foundry and machine-shop products
  - Machine tools
  - Radios and phonographs
  - Textile machinery and parts
  - Typewriters and parts
- Transportation equipment
  - Aircraft
  - Automobiles
  - Cars, electric and steam railroad
  - Locomotives
  - Shipbuilding
- Railroad repair shops
  - Electric railroad
  - Steam railroad
- Nonferrous metals and their products
  - Aluminum manufactures
  - Brass, bronze, and copper products
  - Clocks and watches
  - Jewelry
  - Lighting equipment
  - Silverware and plated ware
  - Smelting and refining--copper, etc.
  - Stamped and enameled ware
- Lumber and allied products
  - Furniture
  - Lumber
    - Millwork
    - Sawmills
- Stone, clay, and glass products
  - Brick, tile, and terra cotta
  - Cement
  - Glass
  - Marble, granite, slate, and other products
  - Pottery

Nondurable-goods groups:

- Textiles and their products
  - Fabrics
    - Carpets and rugs
    - Cotton goods
    - Cotton small wares
    - Dyeing and finishing textiles
    - Hats, fur-felt
    - Knit goods
    - Silk and rayon goods
    - Woolen and worsted goods
  - Wearing apparel
    - Clothing, men's
    - Clothing, women's
    - Corsets and allied garments
    - Men's furnishings
    - Millinery
    - Shirts and collars
- Leather and its manufactures
  - Boots and shoes
  - Leather
- Food and kindred products
  - Baking
  - Beverages
  - Butter
  - Canning and preserving
  - Confectionery
  - Flour
  - Ice cream
  - Slaughtering and meat packing
  - Sugar, beet
  - Sugar refining, cane
- Tobacco manufactures
  - Chewing and smoking tobacco and snuff
  - Cigars and cigarettes
- Paper and printing
  - Boxes, paper
  - Paper and pulp
  - Printing and publishing
    - Book and job
    - Newspapers and periodicals
- Chemicals and allied products, and petroleum refining
- Other than petroleum refining
  - Chemicals
  - Cottonseed--oil, cake, and meal
  - Druggists' preparations
  - Explosives
  - Fertilizers
  - Paints and varnishes
  - Rayon and allied products
  - Soap
- Petroleum refining
- Rubber products
  - Rubber boots and shoes
  - Rubber goods, other than boots, shoes, tires, and inner tubes
  - Rubber tires and inner tubes

NONMANUFACTURING INDUSTRIES

- Coal mining
  - Anthracite
  - Bituminous
- Metalliferous mining
- Quarrying and nonmetallic mining
- Crude petroleum producing
- Public utilities
  - Telephone and telegraph
  - Electric light and power and manufactured gas
  - Electric-railroad and motor-bus operation and maintenance
- Trade
  - Wholesale
  - Retail
- Hotels (year-round)
- Laundries
- Dyeing and cleaning
- Brokerage
- Insurance
- Building construction

EMPLOYMENT AND PAY ROLLS IN DECEMBER 1936

Approximately 470,000 workers were added in December to the pay rolls of the combined 89 manufacturing and 16 nonmanufacturing industries surveyed each month by the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Aggregate weekly wage disbursements to the workers employed were about $14,100,000 higher in December than in the preceding month.

A comparison of employment in December 1936 with December 1935 indicates that more than 1,340,000 additional workers were provided jobs over the year's interval. Weekly pay rolls in December 1936 were nearly $53,000,000 greater than in December 1935.

In the nonmanufacturing industries seasonal expansion in retail trade provided jobs for an additional 380,000 workers in December. During the month, the level of employment in the merchandising group, which is composed of department, variety, and general merchandising stores and mail-order houses, advanced by nearly one-third. Total employment in this group was more than 11 percent higher than in December 1929.

MANUFACTURING INDUSTRIES

Nearly 8,190,000 wage earners were employed in factories in December. This was an increase of about 86,000 workers over the previous month. The continued gains in factory employment registered each month since January 1936 brought the level of employment to its highest point since December 1929.

Total weekly wage payments in December to workers employed in manufacturing establishments amounted to $192,400,000 -- an increase of $8,400,000 over the preceding month. Weekly pay rolls in December were higher than for any month since May 1930.

The increases in factory employment and pay rolls in December are particularly significant, inasmuch as employment generally declines from November to December. The sharp gain (4.5 percent) in the weekly wage income of the workers employed was partly due to the large number of wage-rate increases which occurred between November 15 and December 15. More than 606,000 of the 4,200,000 factory wage earners covered in the monthly survey received increases in wage rates during this period. The industries reporting the largest numbers of employees affected by wage increases were blast furnaces and rolling mills, foundries, cotton goods, woolen and worsted goods, automobiles, tires and tubes, petroleum refining, chemicals, and paper and pulp. The wage increases reported by these industries represent earnings only and do not include gift or bonus payments.

Employment and Pay Rolls in 1936. Averaged over the 12-month period, employment in 1936 was about 7 percent higher than in 1935. It was still 12 percent smaller than the average for 1929. Aggregate weekly pay rolls in 1936 averaged 15 percent more than in 1935 but 24 percent less than in 1929.

YEAR	EMPLOYMENT	PAY ROLLS
1936	7,700,000	$167,500,000
1935	7,200,000	145,000,000
1934	6,900,000	127,800,000
1933	6,000,000	100,500,000
1932	5,500,000	94,300,000
1931	6,500,000	137,000,000
1930	7,600,000	179,900,000
1929	8,800,000	221,800,000

DURABLE-GOODS INDUSTRIES

Employment. Nearly 59,000 workers were added to the pay rolls of the durable-goods group of industries in December. The largest gains in employment were recorded in the transportation-equipment group (28,800) and in machinery manufacturing (21,200). Employment declined by 5,400 in lumber and 1,800 in stone, clay, and glass.

All of the durable-goods groups of industries reported more workers employed in December 1936 than in December 1935. The increases amounted to 157,600 in machinery manufacturing, 128,000 in iron and steel,

ESTIMATED EMPLOYMENT AND PAY ROLLS IN MANUFACTURING INDUSTRIES

DECEMBER 1936, NOVEMBER 1936, and DECEMBER 1935

INDUSTRY	NUMBER OF WORKERS EMPLOYED			AMOUNT OF WEEKLY PAY ROLL		
	DECEMBER 1936*	NOVEMBER 1936‡	DECEMBER 1935	DECEMBER 1936*	NOVEMBER 1936‡	DECEMBER 1935
All industries	8,186,600	8,100,300	7,389,300	$192,376,000	$183,983,000	$157,333,000
Durable-goods groups:	*3,986,600*	*3,927,900*	*3,455,500*	*104,996,000*	*100,700,000*	*80,992,000*
Iron and steel	848,800	840,200	720,800	24,905,000	23,277,000	18,025,000
Machinery	1,006,800	985,600	849,200	26,856,000	25,117,000	20,232,000
Transportation equipment	675,100	646,300	584,900	20,364,000	19,435,000	15,820,000
Railroad repair shops	295,000	292,200	259,400	8,870,000	8,843,000	7,487,000
Nonferrous metals	315,400	310,900	277,500	7,717,000	7,476,000	6,083,000
Lumber	611,500	616,900	553,200	11,073,000	11,128,000	8,968,000
Stone, clay, and glass	234,000	235,800	210,500	5,211,000	5,424,000	4,377,000
Nondurable-goods groups:	*4,200,000*	*4,172,400*	*3,933,800*	*87,380,000*	*83,283,000*	*76,341,000*
Textiles	1,735,300	1,707,600	1,629,400	30,029,000	27,621,000	26,291,000
Leather	303,400	287,900	293,400	5,435,000	4,702,000	5,093,000
Foods	735,800	758,500	684,800	16,053,000	16,429,000	14,148,000
Tobacco	87,300	91,200	85,300	1,233,000	1,219,000	1,146,000
Paper and printing	563,000	557,700	532,700	15,266,000	14,657,000	13,468,000
Chemicals	395,300	396,800	375,100	9,839,000	9,510,000	8,563,000
Rubber	136,400	134,300	116,000	3,600,000	3,510,000	2,840,000
Unclassified	243,500	238,400	217,100	5,925,000	5,635,000	4,792,000

* *Preliminary* ‡ *Revised*

90,200 in transportation equipment, 58,300 in lumber, 37,900 in nonferrous metals, 35,600 in railroad repair shops, and 23,500 in stone, clay, and glass.

Pay Rolls. With the exception of a decline of $213,000 in stone, clay, and glass and $55,000 in lumber, all groups of durable-goods industries reported higher weekly pay rolls in December, as compared with the preceding month. The net gain over the month interval was estimated at approximately $4,300,000.

Wage earners in the durable-goods industries received nearly $24,000,000 more in weekly wages in December 1936 than in December 1935. The increases affected all groups and varied in amounts from $834,000 in stone, clay, and glass to $6,620,000 in machinery manufacturing and $6,880,000 in iron and steel.

NONDURABLE-GOODS INDUSTRIES

Employment. Approximately 27,600 more workers were engaged in manufacturing nondurable goods in December than in November. Substantial gains were reported in textiles and leather and smaller increases in paper and printing, rubber, and in the unclassified industries. Fewer workers were employed in the manufacture of foodstuffs, tobacco, and chemicals.

About 266,000 more wage earners were employed in the nondurable-goods group of

industries in December 1936 than in December 1935. Employment advanced by nearly 106,000 in textiles and 51,000 in foodstuffs. In the remaining groups the gains over the year's interval ranged from 2,000 in tobacco to 30,300 in paper and printing.

Pay Rolls. Approximately $4,100,000 was added to the weekly wage income of workers in the nondurable-goods industries in December. The largest increase in pay rolls ($2,400,000) occurred in textiles. Smaller increases were reported for all the remaining industries except foodstuffs, which reported a decline of $376,000.

Over the 12-month period, December 1935 to December 1936, wage disbursements in the nondurable-goods industries rose by $11,040,000. The weekly wage income of the workers employed in these industries advanced by $3,738,000 in textiles, $1,905,000 in foodstuffs, $1,798,000 in paper and printing, $1,276,000 in chemicals, $1,133,000 in unclassified industries, $760,000 in rubber, $342,000 in leather, and $87,000 in tobacco.

TREND OF EMPLOYMENT AND PAY ROLLS IN MANUFACTURING INDUSTRIES

Factory employment in December advanced about 1 percent. It was 10.8 percent higher than in December 1935. The Bureau of Labor Statistics preliminary index of employment in manufacturing industries was 97.7 in December 1936, compared with 96.7 in the previous month, 88.2 in December 1935, and 100 as the average for the 3 years, 1923-25. This means that for every 1,000 workers employed on the average during 1923-25, 977 had jobs in manufacturing establishments in December, as against 967 in November, and 882 in December 1935.

The Bureau's index of factory pay rolls rose sharply in December. It was 4.5 percent higher than in November and more than 22 percent higher than in December 1935. The pay-roll index stood at 94.6 in December, 90.5 in the preceding month, and 77.4 in December 1935. In other words, for every $1,000 disbursed by manufacturing establishments in weekly pay rolls in 1923-25, $946 was paid out in December, $905 in the previous month, and $774 in December 1935.

Employment in December increased in both the durable- and nondurable-goods industries. In the durable-goods group it was larger than at any time since April 1930. In the nondurable-goods group, with the exceptions of September and October 1936, it was larger than at any time since November 1929.

Weekly pay rolls advanced 4.3 percent in December in the durable-goods industries and about 5 percent in the nondurable-goods industries.

HOURS OF WORK AND EARNINGS IN MANUFACTURING INDUSTRIES

Factory employment in December averaged about 41.5 hours per week--nearly 1 hour per week more than in the previous month and about 2½ hours per week more than in December 1935. Hourly earnings averaged approximately 59.5 cents in December, as against 58 cents in November and 57 cents in December 1935. Workers in manufacturing establishments earned on the average $25 per week in December. This was about $1 per week more than in the preceding month and $2.45 per week more than in December 1935.

In the five selected durable-goods industries the average weekly hours and average hourly and weekly earnings in December 1936 were--

Weekly hours:
- 45.0 in foundries and machine shops
- 43.5 in blast furnaces and rolling mills
- 43.0 in brick manufacturing
- 42.5 in automobiles
- 42.0 in sawmills

Hourly earnings (in cents):
- 80.0 in automobiles
- 73.0 in blast furnaces
- 62.0 in foundries and machine shops
- 47.5 in brick manufacturing
- 46.0 in sawmills

Weekly earnings:
- $34.00 in automobiles
- 31.60 in blast furnaces and rolling mills
- 27.95 in foundries and machine shops
- 20.30 in brick manufacturing
- 19.00 in sawmills

Average weekly hours of work and average hourly and weekly earnings in the five selected nondurable-goods industries in December 1936 were--

Weekly hours:
- 44.5 in slaughtering and meat packing
- 44.0 in paper and pulp
- 40.0 in cotton-goods manufacturing
- 36.5 in petroleum refining
- 36.0 in tires and inner tubes

Hourly earnings (in cents):
- 88.5 in tires and inner tubes
- 86.0 in petroleum refining
- 58.0 in slaughtering and meat packing
- 55.0 in paper and pulp
- 38.5 in cotton-goods manufacturing

Weekly earnings:
- $31.55 in tires and inner tubes
- 31.05 in petroleum refining
- 25.55 in slaughtering and meat packing
- 24.25 in paper and pulp
- 15.35 in cotton-goods manufacturing

HOURS OF WORK AND EARNINGS IN TRANSPORTATION EQUIPMENT INDUSTRIES AND RAILROAD REPAIR SHOPS

INDUSTRY	HOURS OF WORK			HOURLY EARNINGS			WEEKLY EARNINGS		
	DECEMBER 1936	INCREASE OR DECREASE		DECEMBER 1936	INCREASE OR DECREASE		DECEMBER 1936	INCREASE OR DECREASE	
		NOV. 1936 TO DEC. 1936	DEC. 1935 TO DEC. 1936		NOV. 1936 TO DEC. 1936	DEC. 1935 TO DEC. 1936		NOV. 1936 TO DEC. 1936	DEC. 1935 TO DEC. 1936
		Percent	*Percent*	*Cents*	*Percent*	*Percent*		*Percent*	*Percent*
Transportation equipment:									
Aircraft	46.0	+ 6.2	+ 4.8	65.0	+ 1.4	- 0.5	$29.35	+ 7.4	+ 0.3
Automobiles	42.5	+ 2.7	+11.6	80.0	+ 2.5	+ 7.1	34.00	+ 5.3	+19.1
Locomotives	43.5	+ 1.6	+14.5	64.5	+ 1.3	+ 5.2	28.10	+ 2.9	+20.5
Railroad cars	40.0	+ 2.1	+ 8.2	64.5	+ 2.0	+ 4.3	25.85	+ 5.2	+13.8
Shipbuilding	35.0	- 2.1	+ 1.4	79.5	+ 2.7	+ 2.0	28.00	+ 0.9	+ 3.6
Railroad repair shops:									
Electric railroad	45.0	+ 0.7	+ 0.5	65.5	+ 2.7	+ 4.9	29.95	+ 2.9	+ 5.6
Steam railroad	44.5	- 0.2	+ 4.2	69.5	- 0.3	+ 0.3	30.85	- 0.6	+ 4.3

The weekly working time of employees in 8 of the 10 selected durable- and nondurable-goods industries advanced from December 1935 to December 1936. Over the 12-month interval the hours of work rose more than 11 percent in automobiles and about 10 percent in brick manufacturing, blast furnaces and rolling mills, and foundries and machine shops.

All of the 10 selected industries reported higher average weekly earnings in December 1936 than in December 1935. The largest gains were approximately $5.35 in blast furnaces, $4.60 in automobiles, $3.50 in foundries, $2.50 in brick manufacturing and paper and pulp, and $2.00 in slaughtering and meat packing.

EMPLOYMENT, PAY ROLLS, WAGES, AND HOURS IN SELECTED NONMANUFACTURING INDUSTRIES

	DECEMBER 1936*	INCREASE OR DECREASE: NOVEMBER 1936 TO DECEMBER 1936	INCREASE OR DECREASE: DECEMBER 1935 TO DECEMBER 1936
RETAIL TRADE		*Percent*	*Percent*
Employment	3,933,400	+11.1	+ 8.1
Weekly pay roll	$69,727,000	+ 8.3	+ 9.7
Weekly hours	44.5	+ 0.7	+ 1.6
Hourly earnings	$0.51	- 3.3	+ 0.7
Weekly earnings	$20.45	- 2.5	+ 1.5
WHOLESALE TRADE			
Employment	1,460,600	+ 1.5	+ 4.9
Weekly pay roll	$42,142,000	- 0.5	+ 6.1
Weekly hours	43.0	- 0.5	+ 0.5
Hourly earnings	$0.65	- 1.6	+ 0.6
Weekly earnings	$28.40	- 1.9	+ 1.1
STEAM RAILROADS			
Employment	1,069,000	- 1.1	+10.1
Weekly pay roll	$36,115,000	+ 0.5	+11.1
Weekly earnings	$33.80	+ 1.5	+ 1.5
BITUMINOUS COAL			
Employment	384,800	+ 1.8	+ 6.1
Weekly pay roll	$9,407,000	+ 5.5	+22.4
Weekly hours	32.5	+ 3.0	+14.5
Hourly earnings	$0.80	+ 0.6	- 0.3
Weekly earnings	$25.75	+ 3.5	+15.4
TELEPHONE & TELEGRAPH			
Employment	394,500	- 0.1	+ 5.9
Weekly pay roll	$11,915,000	+ 0.9	+ 8.9
Weekly hours	38.5	- 0.1	+ 0.5
Hourly earnings	$0.80	+ 1.1	+ 2.8
Weekly earnings	$29.85	+ 1.0	+ 3.0

	DECEMBER 1936*	INCREASE OR DECREASE: NOVEMBER 1936 TO DECEMBER 1936	INCREASE OR DECREASE: DECEMBER 1935 TO DECEMBER 1936
HOTELS		*Percent*	*Percent*
Employment	244,400	- 0.7	+ 3.9
Weekly pay roll	$3,450,000	+ 0.3	+ 8.8
Weekly hours	48.0	+ 0.9	+ 1.5
Hourly earnings	$0.29	- 0.1	+ 2.8
Weekly earnings	$13.90	+ 1.0	+ 4.7
POWER and LIGHT			
Employment	298,200	- 0.3	+ 7.4
Weekly pay roll	$8,917,000	+ 2.2	+ 9.1
Weekly hours	40.5	+ 2.7	+ 1.6
Hourly earnings	$0.80	*No change*	+ 0.9
Weekly earnings	$32.45	+ 2.5	+ 1.5
ELECTRIC RAILROADS			
Employment	193,600	- 0.7	+ 2.8
Weekly pay roll	$5,927,000	- 0.5	+ 4.9
Weekly earnings	$30.85	+ 0.2	+ 1.9
LAUNDRIES			
Employment	204,300	+ 0.7	+ 8.0
Weekly pay roll	$3,349,000	+ 2.2	+12.9
Weekly hours	43.0	+ 1.7	+ 3.5
Hourly earnings	$0.37	- 0.5	+ 0.9
Weekly earnings	$16.30	+ 1.5	+ 4.4
DYEING & CLEANING			
Employment	45,900	- 4.5	+ 5.8
Weekly pay roll	$844,000	- 4.1	+ 9.2
Weekly hours	42.0	- 0.7	+ 1.3
Hourly earnings	$0.45	+ 1.2	+ 3.1
Weekly earnings	$18.30	+ 0.4	+ 3.2

* *Preliminary*

BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC CONDITIONS IN DECEMBER 1936

AGRICULTURE

Farm Income. The cash income of farmers from the sale of farm products in December was estimated by the Department of Agriculture at $725,000,000, compared with $749,000,000 in November and $613,000,000 in December 1935. Government rental and benefit payments to farmers aggregated $36,000,000 in December, $19,000,000 in November, and $50,000,000 in December 1935.

The total cash farm income from all sources for the entire year of 1936 was estimated at $7,865,000,000. This compares with $7,090,000,000 in 1935, $4,328,000,000 in 1932, and about $10,480,000,000 in 1929.

Farm Wages. Averaged for the country as a whole hired farm hands receiving board earned about $20.70 per month during the 3-month period ending January 1, 1937, compared with $22.50 per month for the quarter ending October 1, 1936, $18.55 for the period ending January 1, 1936, and $20.40 per month as the average for the 5 years 1910-14.

Farm workers not receiving board averaged about $31.35 per month for the period ending January 1, 1937, as against $32.85 per month for the quarter ending October 1, 1936, $28.65 for the period ending January 1, 1936, and $29.10 per month from 1910 to 1914.

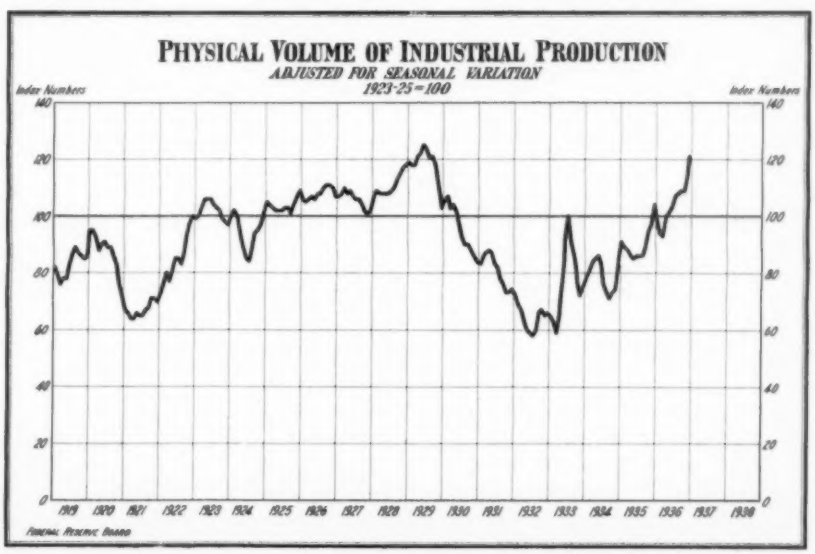
INDUSTRY AND TRADE

The actual volume of goods produced in December 1936 was about the same as in November, although production generally declines sharply at this time of the year. Compared with changes from November to December of former years, the level of production in December 1936 should properly be interpreted as a fundamental increase. The Federal Reserve Board's seasonally adjusted index makes allowance for this fact. Accordingly this index rose to 121, compared with 114 in the previous month, 101 in December 1935, and 100 as the average for the 3-year period, 1923-25. The December 1936 index was 6 percent higher than in November and nearly 20 percent higher than in December 1935.

Output of automobiles advanced sharply. Production of steel and lumber declined by less than the amount expected for this season of the year.

Activity in textile mills reached the highest level on record. The manufacture of leather and shoes and other nondurable goods was maintained during the month.

Retail sales of department stores recorded the customary holiday rise.



BUSINESS AND INDUSTRIAL BAROMETERS

Automobiles. Nearly half a million (498,700) passenger cars and trucks were produced in December 1936. In the previous month production totaled 394,900, and in December 1935, 404,500 units.

Bituminous Coal. Output of bituminous coal in December totaled 44,500,000 tons--an increase of 2,900,000 tons over November and of 9,100,000 tons over December 1935.

Building Construction. The value of building permits issued in 1,490 cities amounted to approximately $121,100,000 in December, compared with $111,900,000 in November. The value of building construction permits issued in December was 44 percent greater than in December 1935.

Electric Power. Output of electric power in December totaled nearly 10,500 million kilowatt hours, as against 9,775 million kilowatt hours in the previous month and 9,140 million kilowatt hours in December 1935.

Railroad Freight Car Loadings. Class I railroads loaded approximately 693,900 freight cars per week in December. This was about 59,500 cars per week less than in November, but 113,300 cars per week more than in December 1935.

Steel. More than 4,650,000 tons of steel ingots were produced in December, compared with 4,340,000 tons in the preceding month and 3,070,000 tons in December 1935.

GOVERNMENT EMPLOYMENT AND RELIEF IN DECEMBER 1936

Employment in the Federal Service. The regular Federal Government service employed about 1,108,000 persons in December. Of this total approximately 791,400 were in the executive branch of the Government, 309,000 in the military service, 5,300 in the legislative, and nearly 2,000 in the judicial service.

P.W.A. Construction Projects. About 242,800 workers had jobs in December at the site of construction on projects directed by the Public Works Administration. They earned approximately $18,600,000. In the previous month 269,200 workers were employed, with a pay roll of $20,850,000.

Other Federal Government Construction Projects. Employment on construction projects financed from regular appropriations and by the Reconstruction Finance Corporation provided work for about 153,500 persons in December, as against 165,000 in November. Wage disbursements amounted to $14,600,000 in December, compared with $15,400,000 in the previous month.

The Works Program. Projects financed by the Works Progress Administration, other than emergency conservation work and that part of P.W.A. work financed by The Works Program, employed 2,960,000 persons in December. Their total wage income for the month amounted to slightly more than $154,700,000.

Emergency Conservation Work. Employment of enrolled workers, camp supervisors, and instructors in the Civilian Conservation Corps declined from 391,200 in November to 377,000 in December. Total wage disbursements decreased from $18,600,000 in November to $18,100,000 in December.

General Relief. Preliminary reports received by the Federal Emergency Relief Administration from 98 cities indicate that about 706,300 families and single persons received $22,200,000 in emergency relief from public funds in December. In November 1936 the same cities reported 679,100 families and single persons receiving approximately $20,200,000.

WHAT HAPPENED TO PRICES IN 1936

Wholesale Prices. The general level of wholesale commodity prices was about 1 percent higher in 1936 than in 1935. The Bureau of Labor Statistics index for the country as a whole averaged 80.8 last year, as against 80.0 in 1935, 95.3 in 1929, and 100 in 1926.

In December 1936 wholesale prices advanced slightly more than 2 percent over the preceding month. They were about 4 percent higher than in December 1935. The Bureau's index was 84.2 in December, 82.4 in November 1936, and 80.9 in December 1935.

INDEX OF WHOLESALE PRICES

ITEM	AVERAGE FOR 1926	AVERAGE FOR 1936	AVERAGE FOR 1935	DECEMBER 1936	DECEMBER 1935	INCREASE (+) OR DECREASE (-) 1935 TO 1936	INCREASE (+) OR DECREASE (-) DECEMBER 1935 TO DECEMBER 1936
	Index	*Index*	*Index*	*Index*	*Index*	*Percent*	*Percent*
All commodities	100	80.8	80.0	84.2	80.9	+ 1.0	+ 4.1
Farm products	100	80.9	78.8	88.5	78.3	+ 2.7	+ 13.0
Raw materials	100	79.9	77.1	85.6	77.7	+ 3.6	+ 10.2
Semimanufactured articles	100	75.9	73.6	82.3	75.2	+ 3.1	+ 9.4
Finished products	100	82.0	82.2	83.8	83.1	- 0.2	+ 0.8

Retail Food Prices. The Bureau of Labor Statistics index of retail food prices, which includes the average price of 84 food items sold at retail in 51 cities of the United States advanced about 2 percent in 1936. It was 75.7 last year, compared with 74.2 in 1935, 96.4 in 1929, and 100 in 1926.

In December 1936 retail food prices averaged slightly higher than in the previous month, and slightly higher than in December 1935. The Bureau's index stood at 76.2 in December, as against 75.8 in November, 75.5 in December 1935, and 100 as the average for 1926.

AVERAGE RETAIL FOOD PRICES FOR THE COUNTRY AS A WHOLE

ITEM	AVERAGE FOR 1936	AVERAGE FOR 1935	DECEMBER 1936	DECEMBER 1935	INCREASE (+) OR DECREASE (-) 1935 TO 1936	INCREASE (+) OR DECREASE (-) DECEMBER 1935 TO DECEMBER 1936
	Cents	*Cents*	*Cents*	*Cents*	*Percent*	*Percent*
Bread, pound	8.2	8.4	8.2	8.6	- 2.4	- 4.7
Butter, pound . . .	39.6	36.0	40.0	40.1	+ 10.0	- 0.2
Milk, quart	12.0	11.8	12.4	11.6	+ 1.7	+ 6.9
Eggs, dozen	37.8	38.3	44.7	41.7	- 1.3	+ 7.2
Potatoes, pound . .	3.2	1.9	3.2	2.3	+ 68.4	+ 39.1
Lard, pound	16.4	19.5	16.8	19.3	- 15.9	- 13.0
Pork chops, pound .	33.8	35.4	31.4	34.8	- 4.5	- 9.8
Round steak, pound .	34.2	36.0	35.1	34.7	- 5.0	+ 1.2
Sugar, pound	5.6	5.7	5.5	5.8	- 1.8	- 5.2
Coffee, pound . . .	24.3	25.6	24.5	24.3	- 5.1	+ 0.8

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